



PATENT APPLICATION
IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of)
)
Thomas T. Buzzell et al.) Art Unit: 3625
)
Application No. 09/648,656) Examiner: Matthew S. Gart
)
Filed: August 25, 2000)
)
For: E-COMMERCE BASED METHOD)
AND SYSTEM FOR MANUFACTURER)
HOSTING OF VIRTUAL DEALER)
STORES AND METHOD FOR)
PROVIDING A SYSTEMIZATION OF)
MACHINE PARTS)
)
Attorney Docket No. 99-722)

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APPELLANTS' BRIEF IN SUPPORT OF APPEAL FROM THE PRIMARY
EXAMINER TO THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

Sir:

This Brief in support of Appellant's Notice of Appeal is being submitted in triplicate pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.192. Please charge deposit account No. 03-1129 the filing fee of \$330.00 as specified in 37 C.F.R. 1.17(c) and any other charges required for the filing of this brief. Two copies of a Fee Transmittal are enclosed. Claims 1-40 are attached hereto in Appendix A, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.192(c)(9).

Real Party in Interest

Caterpillar Inc. is the assignee of the present application and, therefore, is the real party in interest in the present appeal.

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04/27/2004 WASFAW1 00000036 031129 09648656
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Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no other pending appeals or interferences related to the application that is the subject of this appeal. Further, Appellant has no knowledge of any appeals or interferences which would have an effect on the present appeal.

Status of Claims

Claims 1-40 are pending in the application that is the subject of this appeal. Claims 29 – 32 have been withdrawn from consideration. The Examiner finally rejected claims 1 – 28 and 33 - 40 in the Office Action dated November 17, 2003. Appellant is appealing the rejection of claims 1 – 28 and 33 - 40.

Status of Amendments

Appellant has filed an Amendment subsequent to the final rejection dated November 17, 2003, (Appellant's "Amendment After Final Rejection" dated February 17, 2004).

Summary of Invention

In general, the present invention includes a technique by which a user may visit the website of a dealer, who is associated with a manufacturer, receive information regarding various products and services of the dealer, and make purchases accordingly. [Page 7, Line 21 – 25]. The dealer's website may be accessed by the client, either directly, or indirectly through the manufacturer's website. The manufacturer has multiple dealer's, one or more of which have their website located on the same server system as the manufacturer's website. That is, the manufacturer's server system host the manufacturer's website and at least one of the dealer's websites. For example, the invention enables a user, on a client system, to access a manufacturer's website located on the manufacturer's server system. The user may access any particular dealer's website from the manufacturer's website. Alternatively the user may go directly to the dealer's website, located on the manufacturer's server system, from the client server. [Page 9 Line 26 – Page 10 Line 8]. A user may request the detailed dealer information (e.g., pricing and availability information). The request is

sent from the client server to the manufacturer's server system. At least some portion of detailed dealer information, and possibly all such information, is located on a dealer server system, separate from the manufacturer's server system. Therefore, the requested detailed dealer information is accessed from the dealer server system, by the manufacturer's server system, and then sent to the client system (either directly through from the dealer server system, or indirectly through the manufacturer's server system). [Page 23, Line 14 – Page 24, Line 12]. There are several advantages to the configuration of this invention. For example when new applications, or application upgrades are rolled out for use by all dealers, the application may be installed on one server system (the manufacturer's server system) as opposed to each of the dealer server systems. Examples of such applications are industry dependent, but may include applications such as product tracking applications, product maintenance applications, product review/selection applications etc. Therefore, the cost of installing and maintaining such applications is greatly reduced with the present invention compared to an architecture that host the dealer websites on separate dealer servers, which would require loading the application on each separate server system. In addition, as mentioned above, the manufacturer's server system of the present invention, may access the dealer server system to obtain detailed dealer information when needed. Therefore, the client still has access to real time detailed dealer information, without the manufacturer's server system having to continuously synchronize data between the manufacturer server system and the dealer server. Continuous data synchronization is difficult and may cause cost and data integrity issues for the process.

Issues

1. Whether the Examiner erred in rejecting claims 1, 4, 8, 11, 15, 18 22, 25, and 34 – 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,970,472 to Allsop (hereafter referred to as "Allsop").
2. Whether the Examiner erred in rejecting claims 38 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,970,472 to Allsop.
3. Whether the Examiner erred in rejecting claims 39 - 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,970,472 to Allsop.

Grouping of Claims

The Examiner's grounds for rejection applied to more than one claim in Issue

1. With respect to each of the rejections, Appellants group the claims as follows:

1. Claims 1 – 28, and 33 - 37 stand together.
2. Claim 38 stands separately.
3. Claims 39 – 40 stand together.

Argument

I. The Examiner erred in rejecting claims 1, 4, 8, 11, 15, 18 22, 25, and 34 – 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Allsop.

A. Claims 1, 4, 8, 11, 15, 18, 22, 25, and 34 - 37

Claim 8 is currently rejected because: “The Examiner notes Fig. 5 [of Allsop] shows a ‘manufacturer’s server system hosting a manufacturer’s web site and a plurality of dealer’s web sites.’” [Office Action of Nov. 17, 2003, Page 10, 4th Paragraph]. In addition, the Examiner has rejected Claim 8 in light of Allsop, Fig. 3, and Col. 8, lines 32-49. [Office Action of Nov. 17, 2003, Page 4, 1st Paragraph]. However the system architecture recited in Claim 8 is not taught or suggested in Allsop. In particular, Claim 8 recites a client system, a manufacturer’s server system in communication with the client system and “hosting a manufacturer’s web site and a plurality of dealer’s web sites”, and a remote dealer server system providing real-time detailed dealer information to the manufacturer system, with the manufacturer server system able to send the detailed dealer information to the client system. This configuration is important in order to reap the benefits of the present invention, as discussed earlier.

Figure 3 of Allsop clearly does not teach the limitations recited in Claim 8. Figure 3 discloses a dealer’s web site 21 implemented on a web server. A users computer 20, interacts directly with the dealer’s web site 21 (located on a separate web server), to purchase a product. If the user wants to confirm the dealer is an authorized dealer, then the users computer interacts with a third computer system 22 that includes a list of authorized dealers for a particular manufacturer. The third server computer system 22 is maintained by a fourth computer system (the manufacturer’s computer system) 23. [Col. 4, Line 55 – Col. 5, Line

24] Therefore, Figure 3 specifically discloses a manufacturer's computer system 23 that is not hosting a plurality of dealer web sites (or even one dealer web site), because a separate server 21 is used for that, and there is no direct interaction between the dealer and manufacturer's servers. Therefore, Figure 3 has no bearing on Claim 8.

As mentioned, Claim 8 has been rejected in light of Figure 5 of Allsop. However, Figure 5 and the associated disclosure do not teach two separate servers, one a manufacturer server and one a dealer server, where the web site of the dealer is located on one of the servers (the manufacturer's server), while the detailed dealer information is located on the other server (the dealer's server), as recited in Claim 8. Figure 5 of Allsop illustrates a manufacturer's web site 41 communicating with a server computer system 50 that has a number of order processing units. The order processing units enable the manufacturer to access, "at any time, detailed information on all sales to-date and receive standardized reports of such information . . ." [Col. 7 Line 1 – 5]. Therefore, to be analogous with the present invention, the order processing units would have to be located on a separate server (e.g., server system 50) than the manufacturer's web site, in order to provide the detailed dealer information to the manufacturer server as recited in Claim 8. If this is what the Examiner is stating, then Figure 5 does not teach Claim 8, because Figure 5 does not disclose locating a dealer's web site on the manufacturer's server along with the manufacturer's web site. The benefits of locating the manufacturer's web sites and dealer websites on the same server system has been discussed, and include cost effectively loading and maintaining applications used by multiple dealers, onto the manufacturer's server system as opposed to each of the dealer's servers. Alternatively, if the Examiner is stating that Figure 5 discloses that the manufacturer's web site 41 and the order processing units may be co-located on server 50, then Figure 5 does not disclose a separate dealer server system that provides the real-time detailed dealer information. Again, the advantage of having a dealer server system maintain detailed dealer information includes eliminating, or reducing, the need to synchronize the detailed dealer data with the manufacturer's server (e.g., keeping accurate copies of the detailed dealer information on the manufacturer's server). In either case, the system recited in Claim 8 is not taught through Figure 5. For the same reasons, Claim 8 is not taught through the corresponding disclosure cited by the Examiner (Col. 8 Lines 32 – 49]

The Examiner has stated that "The use and definition of the middleware application system in the instant application is functionally equivalent to the use and definition of the server system disclosed in Allsop." [Office Action of November 17, 2003, Page 9, Third Paragraph]. However, with all due respect, this statement seems inconsistent with Allsop. Claim 8 expressly recites a client system, a manufacturer server system (having

a middleware application system), and a remote dealer server system. If the server system (50) disclosed in Allsop (referencing Fig. 5 of Allsop), was the functional equivalent of the middleware application, then the order processing units would either be located on the same server as the manufacturer's website (meaning the detailed dealer information disclosed in Allsop would be located on the manufacturer's server system, which is functionally different with the present invention which accesses the dealer's server system to access the detailed dealer information), or the order processing units would have to be located on another server than the server system 50, which is contrary to the disclosure in Allsop. The reason is that the manufacturer server system of the present invention accesses a remote dealer server system to access detailed dealer information. If the server system (50) disclosed in Allsop was the same as the middleware application, the detailed dealer information would already be present on the manufacturer's server system. This is not the case in the instant application, in part because of the difficulty in continuously synchronizing the detailed dealer information that would be needed to reside on the manufacturer's server system. Therefore, the middleware application of the instant application is not the functional equivalent of the server system disclosed in Alsop.

The configuration recited in Claim 8 is important due to the efficiencies such a configuration provides. For example when new applications or application upgrades are rolled out for use by all dealers, the application may be installed on one server system (the manufacturer's server system) as opposed to each of the dealer server systems. Therefore, the cost of installing and maintaining such applications is greatly reduced compared to an architecture that host the dealer websites on separate dealer servers. In addition, having detailed dealer information located on dealer servers alleviates the need for maintaining such information on the manufacturer's server and having to continuously synchronize the data between the two servers. Therefore, Claim 8 is believed allowable in light of Allsop. For analogous reasons, Claims 1, 15, and 22 are believed allowable.

Claim 34 recites "accessing a dealer's web site from a manufacturer's web site, both web sites being located on a manufacturer server system", and "accessing said real-time detailed dealer information with said manufacturer server system from a remote dealer server system, via said dealer web site". For reasons analogous to those above with respect to Claim 8, these limitations are not taught or suggested by Allsop.

Allsop also does not teach or suggest Claim 37 based on arguments analogous to those provided with respect to Claim 8. Claim 37 recites, "accessing a dealers' web site located on a manufacturer server system from a client system, via a manufacturer's web site located on the manufacturer's server", and "accessing said detailed dealer information with

said manufacturer server system from a remote dealer server system”. However, Figure 5 of Allsop and the associated disclosure does not teach or suggest accessing the dealer web site from the manufacturer’s web site where they are located on the same server, and also does not teach or suggest accessing the detailed dealer information located on a dealer’s server, separate from the manufacturers server that is hosting the dealer web site. Therefore, Claim 37 is believed to be allowable in light of Allsop.

In light of the foregoing arguments, Appellant respectfully submits that the Examiner’s rejection of Claims 1, 4, 8, 11, 15, 18 22, 25, and 34 – 40 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by Allsop was improper. Therefore, independent Claims 1, 8, 15, 22, 34, 35, and 37 are believed to be allowable. Accordingly, the associated dependent claims 2 – 7, 9 – 14, 16 – 21, 23 – 28, 33, and 38 – 40 are believed to be allowable.

II. The Examiner erred in rejecting claim 38 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Allsop.

A. Claim 38

Claim 38 is currently rejected “under the same rationale as set forth in claims 1, 4, 8, 11, 15, 18, 22, 25, and 34 – 36”. [Office Action of November 17, 2003, Page 6, First Paragraph] Claim 38 states the step of establishing detailed dealer information in response to accessing the dealer’s web site further includes the steps of:

“selecting a product characteristic;
establishing a plurality of systems in response to said product characteristic;
selecting a desired system in response to said plurality of systems;
establishing a plurality of parts in response to said desired system;
selecting one or more of said plurality of parts; and
establishing said detailed dealer information in response to said one or more selected parts.”

Claims 1, 4, 8, 11, 15, 18, 22, 25 and 34 – 36, don’t recite the limitations recited in Claim 38. In addition, the rejections for those claims do not address the limitations recited in Claim 38. Allsop discloses, “In the method, an order processing unit which corresponds to a single brand and a single authorized dealer for products of the brand is maintained. The processing unit is for receiving and processing orders for products of the

brand.” [Col. 2, Line 54 – 58]. However this does not teach or suggest the specific manner in which the detailed dealer information is established, as recited in Claim 38.

In light of the foregoing arguments, Appellant respectfully submits that the Examiner’s rejection of Claims 38 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by Allsop was improper.

III. The Examiner erred in rejecting claim 39 - 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Allsop.

A. Claim 39-40

Claim 38 is currently rejected “under the same rationale as set forth in claims 1, 4, 8, 11, 15, 18, 22, 25, and 34 – 36”. [Office Action of November 17, 2003, Page 6, First Paragraph] Claim 39 recites, “A method, as set forth in claim 38, wherein the step of establishing a plurality of parts further comprises the step of providing an electronic link to at least one of a picture, a schematic, and a video associated with one or more of said plurality of parts.”

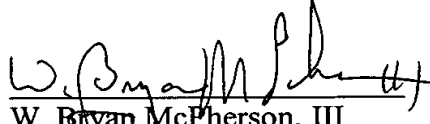
Claims 1, 4, 8, 11, 15, 18, 22, 25 and 34 – 36, don’t recite the details recited in Claim 39. In addition, the rejections for those claims do not address the limitations recited in Claim 39. Allsop discloses, “In the method, an order processing unit which corresponds to a single brand and a single authorized dealer for products of the brand is maintained. The processing unit is for receiving and processing orders for products of the brand.” [Col. 2, Line 54 – 58]. However this does not teach or suggest “the step of providing an electronic link to at least one of a picture, a schematic, and a video associated with one or more of said plurality of parts”, as recited in Claim 39.

In light of the foregoing arguments, Appellant respectfully submits that the Examiner’s rejection of Claims 39 and 40 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by Allsop was improper.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully request the Board to reverse the Examiner's final rejection of the claims pending in the present application and to order the allowance of those claims.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Bryan McPherson, III', is written over a horizontal line.

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Appendix A
Claims Involved in the Appeal

Claims

1. (previously presented) An e-commerce based method for requesting information and purchasing products from a dealer through a manufacturer, the method comprising:

 sending a request for detailed dealer information to a manufacturer server system hosting a manufacturer's web site and a plurality of dealer web sites, using a client system;

 displaying real-time detailed dealer information on said client system based on said request;

 receiving said real-time detailed dealer information from said manufacturer server system; and

 accessing said real-time detailed dealer information with said manufacturer server system from a remote dealer server system via a middleware application system.

2. (original) The method of Claim 1, further including sending a quote number from said remote dealer server system with said detailed dealer information for identifying said request.

3. (original) The method of Claim 2, further including purchasing an item with said client system that further includes the steps of:

 sending said quote number to said manufacturer server system;

 sending said quote number with said manufacturer server system to said remote dealer server system via said middleware application system;

 completing said purchasing with said remote dealer server system;

 sending a confirmation number to said manufacturer server system; and

 sending said confirmation number with said manufacturer server system to said client system.

4. (original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said real-time detailed dealer information is selected from the group consisting of dealer-level inventory, pricing, and sales information.

5. (original) The method of Claim 1, further including displaying consumer personalized data received from said manufacturer server system on said client system.

6. (original) The method of Claim 5, wherein said consumer personalized data information is selected from the group consisting of weather, investments, stock portfolio, news and links.

7. (original) The method of Claim 6, wherein said news is selected from the group consisting of local, national, international and industrial.

8. (previously presented) An e-commerce based system for requesting information and purchasing products from a dealer through a manufacturer, the system comprising:

a client system;

a manufacturer server system in communication with said client system, said manufacturer server system having a middleware application system said manufacturer's server system hosting a manufacturer's web site and a plurality of dealer's web sites; and

a remote dealer server system in communication with said middleware application system to provide real-time detailed dealer information to said manufacturer server system via said middleware application system with said manufacturer server system able to send said real-time detailed dealer information to said client system for displaying.

9. (original) The system of Claim 8, wherein said remote dealer server system sends a quote number with said detailed dealer information to said manufacturer server system via said middleware application system.

10. (original) The system of Claim 9, wherein said client system purchases an item by sending said quote number to said manufacturer server system, said manufacturer server system then sends said quote number to said remote dealer server system via said middleware application system, said remote dealer server system then completes said purchase and sends a confirmation number to said manufacturer server system, said manufacturer server system then sends said confirmation number to said client system.

11. (original) The system of Claim 8, said real-time detailed dealer information is selected from the group consisting of dealer-level inventory, pricing, and sales information.

12. (original) The system of Claim 8, wherein said client system displays consumer personalized data received from said manufacturer server system.

13. (original) The system of Claim 12, wherein said consumer personalized data information is selected from the group consisting of weather, investments, stock portfolio, news and links.

14. (original) The system of Claim 13, wherein said news is selected from the group consisting of local, national, international and industrial.

15. (previously presented) An e-commerce based method for requesting information and purchasing products from a dealer through a manufacturer, the method comprising:

creating an item list using a client system;

sending said item list to a manufacturer server system, said manufacturer's server system hosting a manufacturer's web site and a plurality of dealer's web sites;

displaying real-time detailed dealer information on said client system based on said item list;

receiving said real-time detailed dealer information from said manufacturer server system; and

accessing said real-time detailed dealer information with said manufacturer server system from a remote dealer server system via a middleware application system.

16. (original) The method of Claim 15, further including sending a quote number from said remote dealer server system with said detailed dealer information to identify the items listed on said item list.

17. (original) The method of Claim 16, further including purchasing said items with said client system further including the steps of:

sending said quote number to said manufacturer server system;

sending said quote number with said manufacturer server system to said remote dealer server system via said middleware application system;

completing said purchasing with said remote dealer server system;

sending a confirmation number to said manufacturer server system; and

sending said confirmation number with said manufacturer server system to said client system.

18. (original) The method of Claim 15, wherein said real-time detailed dealer information is selected from the group consisting of dealer-level inventory, pricing, and sales information.

19. (original) The method of Claim 15, further including displaying consumer personalized data received from said manufacturer server system on said client system.

20. (original) The method of Claim 19, wherein said client system consumer personalized data information is selected from the group consisting of weather, investments, stock portfolio, news and links.

21. (original) The method of Claim 20, wherein said news is selected from the group consisting of local, national, international and industrial.

22. (previously presented) An e-commerce based system for requesting information and purchasing products from a dealer through a manufacturer, the system comprising:

a client system for creating an item list;

a manufacturer server system for receiving said item list, said manufacturer's server system hosting a manufacturer's web site and a plurality of dealer's web sites; and

a remote dealer server system for sending real-time detailed dealer information to said manufacturer server system via a middleware application system based on said item list received from said manufacture server system via said middleware application system and said manufacturer server system for sending said real-time detailed dealer information to said client system for displaying.

23. (original) The system of Claim 22, wherein said remote dealer server system for sending a quote number to identify the item listed on said item list with said detailed dealer information to said manufacturer server system via said middleware application system.

24. (original) The system of Claim 23, wherein said client system for purchasing said item listed on said item list by sending said quote number to said manufacturer server system with said manufacturer server system then sending said quote number to said remote dealer server system via said middleware application system, said remote dealer server system then completing said purchase and sending a confirmation number to said manufacturer server system, said manufacturer server system then sending said confirmation number to said client system.

25. (original) The system of Claim 22, wherein said real-time detailed dealer information is selected from the group consisting of dealer-level inventory, pricing, and sales information.

26. (original) The system of Claim 22, wherein said client system displays consumer personalized data received from said manufacturer server system.

27. (original) The system of Claim 26, wherein said client system consumer personalized data information is selected from the group consisting of weather, investments, stock portfolio, news and links.

28. (original) The system of Claim 27, wherein said news is selected from the group consisting of local, national, international and industrial.

29. (previously withdrawn) An e-commerce based method of providing a systemization of machine parts to a consumer, said method comprising the steps of:

- collecting information from said consumer regarding a machine;
- selecting a system of machine parts from at least two available systems, wherein each of said available systems includes at least two different components of machine parts;
- selecting a component of machine parts, wherein each of said available components includes at least one group of machine parts;
- selecting a group of machine parts, and wherein each of said available systems, sections, and group are adapted to correspond to machine parts within said machine;
- and
- providing information to said consumer regarding machine parts which are included in said selected system, section, and group thereby allowing said consumer to use said systemization of machine parts.

30. (previously withdrawn) The e-commerce based method of Claim 29, wherein said step of collecting information from said consumer regarding a machine includes product, model, and configuration type.

31. (previously withdrawn) An e-commerce based method of providing a systemization of machine parts to a consumer, said method comprising:
collecting information from said consumer regarding a machine;
selecting a system of machine parts from at least two available systems, wherein each of said available systems includes at least two different components of machine parts;
selecting a component of machine parts, wherein each of said available components includes at least two different groups of machine parts;
selecting a group of machine parts, wherein each of said available groups is comprised of at least one individual part of machine parts;
selecting an individual part of machine parts, and wherein each of said available systems, components, groups, and individual part are adapted to correspond to machine parts within said machine; and
providing information to said consumer regarding machine parts which make up said selected system, component, group, and individual part thereby allowing said consumer to use said systemization of machine parts.

32. (previously withdrawn) The e-commerce based method of Claim 31, wherein said step of collecting information from said consumer regarding a machine includes a product, model, and configuration type.

33. (previously presented) A method, as set forth in claim 2, further comprising the steps of:
sending said quote number to said manufacturer server system from said dealer server system; and
sending said quote number from said manufacturer server system to said client server system.

34. (previously presented) An e-commerce based method for requesting information and purchasing products from a dealer through a manufacturer, the method comprising:

- accessing a dealer's web site from a manufacturer's web site, both web sites being located on a manufacturer server system;

- sending a request for detailed dealer information to a manufacturer server system using a client system;

- accessing said real-time detailed dealer information with said manufacturer server system from a remote dealer server system via said dealer web site;

- receiving said real-time detailed dealer information from said manufacturer server system; and

- displaying said real-time detailed dealer information on said client system based on said request.

35. (previously presented) An e-commerce based method for requesting information and purchasing products from a dealer through a manufacturer, the method comprising:

- receiving at a manufacturer server system, a request for detailed dealer information sent by a client system, said manufacturer server system hosting a manufacturer's web site and a plurality of dealer web sites;

- accessing said real-time detailed dealer information with said manufacturer server system from a remote dealer server system via a middleware application system;

- sending said real-time detailed dealer information from said manufacturer server system to said client system; and

- displaying said real-time detailed dealer information on said client system based on said request.

36. (previously presented) A system as set forth in Claim 22, wherein said client system creates said item list in response to interacting with one of said plurality of dealer web sites located on said manufacturer server system.

37. (previously presented) An e-commerce based method for requesting information and purchasing products from a dealer through a manufacturer, the method comprising:

- accessing a dealers' web site located on a manufacturer server system from a client system, via a manufacturer's web site located on said manufacturer's server system;

- sending a request for a detailed dealer information from said client system to said manufacturer's server system;

- accessing said detailed dealer information with said manufacturer server system from a remote dealer server system via a middleware application system;

- sending said real-time detailed dealer information from said manufacturer server system to said client system; and

- displaying said real-time detailed dealer information on said client system based on said request.

38. (previously presented) A method, as set forth in claim 37, wherein the step of establishing detailed dealer information in response to accessing said dealer's web site further comprises the steps of:

- selecting a product characteristic;

- establishing a plurality of systems in response to said product characteristic;

- selecting a desired system in response to said plurality of systems;

- establishing a plurality of parts in response to said desired system;

- selecting one or more of said plurality of parts; and

- establishing said detailed dealer information in response to said one or more selected parts.

39. (previously presented) A method, as set forth in claim 38, wherein the step of establishing a plurality of parts further comprises the step of providing an electronic link to at least one of a picture, a schematic, and a video associated with one or more of said plurality of parts.

40. (previously presented) A method, as set forth in claim 38, wherein said product characteristic includes at least one of a product type, product model, and a product configuration.